

## **Introduction**

The Town / Village of Harrison recognized the need and importance of a multi-hazard mitigation plan and initiated its development. The Town / Village contracted with Dolph Rotfeld Engineering P.C. (DRE) to facilitate and develop the plan. DRE's role was to:

- Assist in establishing a hazard mitigation planning committee (HMPC) as defined by regulations in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA),
- Meet the DMA requirements as established by federal regulations and following the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) planning guidance,
- Facilitate the entire planning process,
- Identify the data requirements that HMPC participants could provide and conduct the research and documentation necessary to augment that data,
- Assist in facilitating the public input process,
- Produce the draft and final plan documents, and Coordinate the New York State Emergency Management Office and FEMA Region II plan reviews.

## **Local Government Participation**

The first order of business was to establish the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee. The committee was established using the guidance provided in FEMA publication 386-1, Getting Started: Building Support for Mitigation Planning. The DMA planning regulations and guidance stress that each local government seeking FEMA approval of their mitigation plan must participate in the planning effort in the following ways:

- Detail areas within the planning area where the risk differs from that facing the entire area
- Identify specific projects to be eligible for funding,
- Have the governing board formally adopt the plan
- Fully participate in the process

For the Town / Village of Harrison HMPC members, "participation" meant:

- Attending and participating in the HMPC meetings
- Providing available data requested of the HMPC
- Reviewing and providing comments on the plan drafts
- Advertising, coordinating, and participating in the public input process
- Coordinating the formal adoption of the plan by the governing board(s)

## **The Planning Process**

DRE established the planning process for the Town / Village of Harrison plan using the DMA planning requirements and FEMA's associated guidance. This guidance is structured around a

four-phase process which indicates the order in which individual chapters of the plan were developed

- 1) Organize Resources
- 2) Assess Risks
- 3) Develop the Mitigation Plan
- 4) Implement the Plan and Monitor Progress

Table 3-1 shows how the expanded process fits into FEMA's four-phase process.

<b>FEMA's 4-Phase Process</b>	<b>Expanded Process</b>
1) Organize Resources 201.6(c)(1) 201.6(b)(1) 201.6(b)(2) and (3)	1)Organize the Planning Effort 2) Involve the Public 3) Coordinate with Other Departments and Agencies
2) Assess Risks 201.6(c)(2)(i) 201.6(c)(2)(ii)	4)Identify the Hazards 5) Assess the Risks
3) Develop the Mitigation Plan 201.6(c)(3)(i) 201.6(c)(3)(ii) 201.6(c)(3)(iii)	6) Set Goals 7) Review Possible Activities 8) Draft an Action Plan
4) Implement the Plan and Monitor Progress 201.6(c)(5) 201.6(c)(4)	9) Adopt the Plan 10) Implement, Evaluate, and Revise the Plan

## **Phase 1: Organize Resources**

### **Planning Step 1: Organize the Planning Effort**

With the Town / Village of Harrison's commitment to participate in the DMA planning process, DRE worked with the Town / Village HMPC Committee Chairman to establish the framework and organization for development of the plan. The HMPC, which was comprised of key Town / Village staff and other local government and stakeholder representatives, developed the plan with leadership from the Town / Village Planner and facilitation by DRE. The list of participating HMPC participants / municipal agencies included:

- Assessor
- Attorney
- Comptroller
- Facilities and Asset Management
- Fire / Rescue / EMS
- Information Technology/Geographic Information Systems
- Planning

- Police Department
- Public Works
- Supervisor and Town Board
- Board of Education
- Neighborhood Representatives and business community

**Other Government and Stakeholder Representatives:**

- FEMA Region II
- New York State Emergency Management Office
- Westchester County Office of Emergency Management
- Westchester Joint Water Works

A full list of participants is available in Appendix G: Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee Members

The planning process officially began on May 6, 2008, with a kick-off meeting in at Town / Village Hall. The meeting covered the scope of work and an introduction to the DMA requirements along with the anticipated level of participation of all member agencies. The HMPC met seven times during the planning period (May 2008 – June 2009). The purpose and outcomes of these meetings is described in Table

Table 3-2 Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee Schedule and Topics

HMPC Meeting	Meeting Topic	Meeting Date
1	Kick-off meeting, introduction to the DMA, the planning process, presentation by NYSEMO, discussion, question and answer	May 6, 2008
2	Compilation of time for matching costs, identification of Hazards using Guidance from FEMA Document 386-1	June 18, 2008
3	Consultant report on list of Hazards to be assessed, public participation process and individual elements	July 9, 2008
4	Review drafts of Introduction, Plan Adoption, Planning Process	September 10, 2008
5	Finalize list of hazards. Begin assessment of identified hazards	October 22, 2008

Agendas and minutes for each of the meetings and lists of attendees are on file with the Town / Village of Harrison Department of Public Works

---

## Planning Step 2: Involve the Public

At the third meeting, the HMPC discussed options for public involvement and agreed to an approach using established public information mechanisms and resources within the community. Public involvement activities included an announcement at the **September XXXX 2008 Town/Village Board** meeting that funding had been received for the development of the Town /Village's Hazard Mitigation Plan, that a committee had been established to prepare the plan document and that the public would be invited to participate and have input to the process. A questionnaire, for residences and businesses was prepared based on information provided in FEMA 386-1, "Getting Started, Building Support for Mitigation Planning". The questionnaire was placed on the Town/Villages website in October 2008. A public meeting was held at completion of the draft-plan on September 17, 2009. A letter was send to all residents and businesses on October 27, 2008 announcing the Town/Villages's development of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, soliciting comments and inviting participating in the process by completing a questionnaire available at Town/Village Hall or on line. When the draft document was completed, it was posted on the Town/Village website and the public was invited to comment on the drafts. Public comments from the questionnaire were compiled and made available to the HMPC. Where appropriate, stakeholder and public comments were incorporated into the final plan, including the sections that address mitigation goals and strategies. All website postings are on file with the Town / Village of Harrison Department of Public Works. The plan is available online at **XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**

## Planning Step 3: Coordinate with Other Departments and Agencies

Early in the planning process, the HMPC determined that data collection, mitigation strategy development, and plan approval would be greatly enhanced by inviting state and federal agencies and organizations to participate in the process. Based on their involvement in hazard mitigation planning, their landowner / proximity to the Town / Village, and/or their interest as a neighboring jurisdiction, representatives from the following agencies were send a letter by the Mayor on November 6, 2008, announcing the start of the Hazard Mitigation Plan Development process and inviting them to participate.

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- New York State Department of Transportation
- New York State Thruway Authority
- City of Rye
- Village of Rye Brook
- Village of Mamaroneck
- Village of Scarsdale
- City of White Plains

In addition to those listed above, the HMPC used technical data, maps, reports, and studies from the following agencies and groups. The HMPC obtained this information either through the respective agency websites or directly from the organization.

- FEMA HAZUS MH
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Westchester County Department of Planning

### **Other Community Planning Efforts and Hazard Mitigation Activities**

Coordination with other community planning efforts is also paramount to the success of this plan. Hazard mitigation planning involves identifying existing policies, tools, and actions that will reduce a community's risk and vulnerability from natural hazards. The Town / Village of Harrison uses a variety of comprehensive planning mechanisms, such as a master plan, an emergency response plan, and municipal policies, to guide growth and development. Integrating existing planning efforts and mitigation policies and action strategies into this multi-hazard mitigation plan establishes a credible and comprehensive plan that ties into and supports other community programs. The development of this plan incorporated where appropriate, information from the following existing plans, studies, reports, and initiatives as well as other relevant data from neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.

- Town / Village of Harrison Master Plan
- Town / Village of Harrison Stormwater Management Plan
- US Army Corps of Engineers Section 905(B) Reconnaissance Study, Westchester County Streams, Westchester County, New York and Fairfield County, New York, July 2008 Final
- Town / Village of Harrison Zoning Regulations
- Town / Village of Harrison Planning Regulations
- Town / Village of Harrison Municipal Code
- Town / Village of Harrison Emergency Response Plan
- 
- 
- 

Other documents were reviewed and considered, as appropriate, during the collection of data to support Planning Steps 4 and 5, which include the hazard identification, vulnerability assessment, and capability assessment.

### **Phase 2: Assess Risks**

#### **Planning Steps 4 and 5: Identify the Hazards and Assess the Risks**

DRE led the HMPC in an exhaustive research effort to identify and document all the natural hazards that have, or could, impact the municipality. Data collection worksheets taken from FEMA Guidance document 386-1 were used in this effort to aid in determining hazards and vulnerabilities and where risk varies across the planning area. Geographic information systems (GIS) were used to display, analyze, and quantify hazards and vulnerabilities. The HMPC also conducted a capability

assessment to review and document the municipalities current capabilities to mitigate risk and vulnerability from natural hazards. By collecting information about existing government programs, policies, regulations, ordinances, and emergency plans, the HMPC can assess those activities and

measures already in place that contribute to mitigating some of the risks and vulnerabilities previously identified. DRE produced two drafts during these planning steps for the HMPC to review in advance of the mitigation planning goals and strategy meetings. The first draft contained the hazard identification. The second draft included the entire risk assessment, containing the hazard identification, the vulnerability assessment, and capability assessment. A more detailed description of the risk assessment process and the results are included in Section 5: Risk Assessment.

### **Phase 3: Develop the Mitigation Plan**

#### **Planning Steps 6 and 7: Set Goals and Review Possible Activities**

DRE facilitated brainstorming and discussion sessions with the HMPC that described the purpose and the process of developing planning goals and objectives, a comprehensive range of mitigation alternatives, and a method of selecting and defending recommended mitigation actions using a series of selection criteria. This information is included in Section 6: Mitigation Strategy.

#### **Planning Step 8: Draft an Action Plan**

Based on input from the HMPC regarding the draft risk assessment and the goals and activities identified in Planning Steps 6 and 7, DRE produced a complete first draft of the plan. This complete draft was posted for HMPC review and comment on the web site. Other agencies were invited to comment on this draft as well. HMPC and agency comments were integrated into the second draft, which was advertised and distributed to collect public input and comments. AMEC integrated comments and issues from the public, as appropriate, along with additional internal review comments and produced a final draft for the New York State Emergency Management Office and FEMA to review and approve, contingent on final adoption by the Town / Village Board.

### **Phase 4: Implement the Plan and Monitor Progress**

#### **Planning Step 9: Adopt the Plan**

In order to secure buy-in and officially implement the plan, the plan was adopted by the Town / Board of Trustees in a draft format on September 17, 2009. A copy of the adoption resolution is included in Appendix A: Plan Adoption. Once the adoption is complete, formal approval by NYSEMO and FEMA can proceed.

### **Planning Step 10: Implement, Evaluate, and Revise the Plan**

The true worth of any mitigation plan is in the effectiveness of its implementation. Up to this point in the planning process, all of the HMPC's efforts have been directed at researching data, coordinating input from participating entities, and developing appropriate mitigation actions. Each recommended action includes key descriptors, such as a lead manager and possible funding sources, to help initiate implementation. An overall implementation strategy is described in Section 7: Plan Maintenance Procedures.

Finally, there are numerous organizations within the Town / Village whose goals and interests interface with hazard mitigation. Coordination with these other planning efforts, as addressed in Planning Step 3, is paramount to the ongoing success of this plan and mitigation in the Town / Village of Harrison and is addressed further in Section 6. A plan update and maintenance schedule and a strategy for continued public involvement are also included in Section 7.